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Major groups' Priorities for Action in water, sanitation and human settlements**

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[1] and the decisions of the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development[2] called for strengthened involvement and enhanced participation of major groups in the activities of the Commission and in the implementation of Agenda 21,[3] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21[4] and the Johannesburg Plan.

2. The Bureau of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development decided to continue to build on the participatory practices of previous sessions of the Commission, in particular the twelfth session, as well as of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.[5] Various opportunities for the exchange of views and discussion will be provided to major groups both during the intergovernmental preparatory meeting and at the thirteenth session of the Commission itself, including interactive discussions and a dialogue session with ministers at the high-level segment, as well as the possibility of commenting throughout the meetings, as time permits.

3. The organization of the input and contributions of major groups to the thirteenth session of the Commission was inspired by practices used at past sessions through a self-selected multi-stakeholder steering group composed of organizing partners from network organizations representing the nine major groups.[6] The organizing partners are: the Women Environment and Development Organization, for women; the Youth Caucus of the Commission on Sustainable Development, for youth and children; the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus of the Commission on

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** The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

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Sustainable Development, the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education and the Indigenous Environmental Network, for indigenous people; the Sustainable Development Issues Network (through the Northern Alliance for Sustainability, Third World Network and the Environment Liaison Centre International), for non-governmental organizations; the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives — Local Governments for Sustainability, for local authorities; the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (through the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), for workers and trade unions; the International Chamber of Commerce and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, for business and industry; the International Council for Science and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations, for the scientific and technological community; and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, for farmers. These organizing partners facilitated the preparation of the major groups priorities for action in water, sanitation and human settlements contained in the annex to the present note.

4. This document builds on the major groups' discussion papers prepared for the twelfth session of the Commission, which provided their overall views on the status of implementation of commitments made related to the three main issues on the agenda, including reference to cross-sectoral themes, successes and challenges of implementation and practical contributions.[7] Those papers also provided case studies and examples of work under way through their own organizations to contribute to the implementation of the commitments set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation related to water, sanitation and human settlements.

5. This is the first time that the written inputs of major groups have been compiled into one document, which outlines each sector's priorities for policy options and possible actions to overcome the constraints and obstacles and meet the challenges identified at the Commission's twelfth session. While major groups concur on a number of issues, there are significant differences in what they identify as needs to be filled as well as possible synergies that may be adopted.

6. The report on the major groups priorities for action (see annex) will provide a basis for the contributions of major groups to the discussions on policy options and possible actions to expedite implementation. It presents various policy opinions and proposed solutions for the consideration of policy makers in their deliberations, and will serve as a starting point for their participation in the intergovernmental preparatory meeting and at the thirteenth session of the Commission.

Notes

[1] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[2] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 9* (E/2003/29).

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I, *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[4] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[5] The multi-stakeholder participation in the sessions of the Commission became a standard part of its work programme at its sixth session through the launch of the dialogue segment in response to General Assembly resolution S-19/2, recommending that the Commission strengthen its interaction with representatives of major groups, inter alia, through greater and better use of focused dialogue sessions. The dialogue segments launched in 1998 have been recognized as a unique participatory model for effectively engaging major groups and Governments in a genuine dialogue on specific sustainable development issues.

[6] Section 3 of Agenda 21 defines major groups as comprising women, children and youth, indigenous people, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and their trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community and farmers.

[7] The major groups' discussion papers for the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development are contained in E/CN.17/2004/10 and E/CN.17/2004/10/Add.1-9, and are available on the Internet at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/mgroups/csd_12/mgdiscussionpapers.htm.

Annex

Major groups' Priorities for Action in water, sanitation and human settlements*

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* This compilation has been prepared, respectively, by: the Women Environment and Development Organization, for women; the Youth Caucus of the Commission on Sustainable Development, for youth and children; the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education and the Indigenous Environmental Network, for indigenous people; the Sustainable Development Issues Network (through the Northern Alliance for Sustainability, Third World Network and the Environment Liaison Centre International), for non-governmental organizations; the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives — Local Governments for Sustainability, for local authorities; the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (through the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), for workers and trade unions; the International Chamber of Commerce and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, for business and industry; the International Council for Science and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations, for the scientific and technological community; and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, for farmers.

I. Women

Access to water and land: human rights

1. Although access to safe drinking water and other resources has been recognized as a human right, implementation of this right has thus far failed, negatively impacting women.

2. The creation of national frameworks (for example, constitutional, legislative and regulatory) is premised on access to water as a basic human right. National and local governments should assume responsibility for implementation.

3. Governments should ensure women's access to and ownership of land, as agreed upon in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Constitutional and legal barriers that bar women from owning or inheriting land should be eliminated in order to ensure their adequate access to housing and water.

4. Women's rights to land, water and other natural resources should be incorporated into the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

5. Women's safe access to water, housing and sanitation should be ensured, particularly in situations of conflict and war.

Private sector involvement in the water and sanitation sector

6. The liberalization of water markets is pushing large sectors of the population further into poverty, forcing the use of unsafe sources of drinking water. Women are badly affected. Policies favouring the privatization of public services create a lack of accountability and transparency.

7. Governments should recognize the negative impacts of water privatization on the livelihoods of poor and indigenous women. Water must be identified by all Governments, the private sector and all other stakeholders as a public good and human right, not a commodity to be traded on the open market. Water management must be for social needs and environmental sustainability rather than for short-term profit.

8. Governments should ensure safe, accessible and affordable drinking water supply (inter alia, through price regulation), sanitation and housing for all citizens, as well as financial support for the most disadvantaged groups in society, such as single-parent households and households affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

9. Water supply should be explicitly excluded from the "environmental services" sector under the General Agreement on Trade in Services of the World Trade Organization.

10. Private sector involvement in water and sanitation provision should be governed by corporate accountability principles and should adhere to the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Private/public partnerships must be subject to legal constraints and governmental oversight to ensure transparency, accountability and the fair and effective provision of services.

11. The private sector involved in water and sanitation should publicly disclose detailed information on operations, labour practices and financial data, including profit, average cost, capital expenditure and outstanding debt.

Financing

12. According to information submitted to the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, less than 5 per cent of investments in public/private partnerships come from the private sector. The idea that the private sector is the main source of financing to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is erroneous.

13. Public/public and NGO/public partnerships should be established. Such partnerships should be formalized and core funding should be made available for women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to facilitate their meaningful contribution in all critical phases of policy, project design and implementation.

14. More funds must be devoted to activities at the local level to help empower women and other disadvantaged groups. These funds should include longer-term and flexible financing for cross-cutting issues.

15. Funds and other resources should be allocated to women's organizations to help them identify their own priorities to successfully address the practical and strategic gender needs of women. These organizations should serve as full partners in water, sanitation and housing initiatives rather than as recipients of aid.

16. In order to meet MDGs, sanitation must have a higher priority on the sustainable development agenda. Eco-sanitation and decentralized sewerage technologies should be enhanced and promoted.

Governance and gender mainstreaming

17. Although gender is a cross-cutting issue, as agreed to at the eleventh session of the Commission, it remains largely invisible in the documents and deliberations of the United Nations and other institutions dealing with sustainable development and natural resources management.

18. Equity, equality, transparency and accountability must be ruling principles for national and local governments delivering water and sanitation services, and guaranteeing sustainable livelihoods in human settlements.

19. Governments should advance implementation of all United Nations mandates referring to gender issues, including Agenda 21, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

20. All institutions dealing with human settlements, water and sanitation should ensure that gender is a central factor in their policies, programmes and budgets. They should use tools such as: sex-disaggregated data; gender analysis; gender-responsive budgeting initiatives; gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems; and gender-sensitive indicators.

21. All public entities that deal with water, sanitation and human settlements should institute gender training and strengthen gender capacity, targeting senior managers, regular staff and personnel in charge of operations and maintenance.

22. Implementation of the targets of MDG 7 should be linked to MDGs 1 and 3. Governments should integrate a gender perspective in their country reports on the implementation of MDG 7. The Commission on Sustainable Development should launch a gender strategy for implementing the MDGs on water and sanitation.

23. Sanitation and water programmes should provide public information on the management of waste of all kinds, including human, household, industrial and agricultural waste.

Promoting women's participation and empowerment

24. Women must be involved as full partners both in assessing the impact of services on women and the poor and in crafting a more proactive approach that addresses women's needs as defined by women.

25. National and local governments must establish consultation and decision-making processes with stakeholders at all levels of policy and decision-making on water, sanitation and human settlements, involving, in particular, poor women, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups.

26. A gender balance is a prerequisite in all of the activities of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Women must be supported in achieving equal representation at all levels and in each and every intergovernmental process related to human settlements, water and sanitation.

27. Institutional expertise, resources and contacts must support women's grass-roots initiatives in relation to water, sanitation and housing, including: soliciting and validating the expertise, priorities and solutions of grass-roots women's groups and providing resources, including funding, to these organizations to enrich, expand and consolidate their knowledge and skills base.

28. Using the expertise of local women, the gender aspects of natural disasters and global climate and environmental change processes must be studied and documented.

II. Children and youth

Challenges

29. Reviewing the report of the Chair of the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the agreements reached at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Declaration, children and youth identified the following challenges in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements.

30. Governments, the United Nations and donor agencies should recognize that there is a gap in institutional frameworks that provide funding and technical support to youth and community-based groups. This gap exists in the criteria for funding allocations, and seems to exclusively affect youth organizations at the grass-roots

level, since often only well-established and well-recognized youth organizations are granted funding and support.

31. The implementation-oriented frameworks solely focus on funding large-scale highly technical options instead of low-cost locally applicable, affordable and available technologies and community-management approaches that confront community challenges in water, sanitation and human settlements.

32. An integrated approach at all levels to deal with all three themes in a holistic manner, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, is lacking.

33. There is continued scepticism surrounding the empowerment of children and youth and their initiatives.

34. There is insufficient communication on issues pertaining to water, sanitation and human settlements.

35. The human rights to adequate, affordable water, housing and sanitation are not fully respected.

In order to meet the targets set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and Millennium Development Goals in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements, we as children and youth have identified the following priorities for action.

36. A participatory approach involving all stakeholders and ensuring good communication and coordination among all actors should be promoted so that development decisions reflect the concerns of all and so as to encourage cooperation between governmental, civil society and private sector activities whereby:

(a) All relevant actors are involved in all levels of the project from planning, implementation and monitoring to the evaluation of projects;

(b) Different interests and responsibilities are acknowledged;

(c) Particular attention is paid to the central role and involvement of children and youth, women and community groups.

37. Children and youth participation should be facilitated and supported through the following methods:

(a) Building awareness and knowledge of children and youth on the themes of water, sanitation and human settlements through:

(i) The implementation of the Basic Education for All strategy, linked with poverty elimination and sustainable development strategies;

(ii) Peer education on indigenous sustainable practices, which should be supported with adequate resources, and indigenous intellectual property rights fully respected and maintained;

(iii) Recognizing, embracing, strengthening and funding children and youth peer education through informal and non-formal structures, while recognizing the critical use of media and technology in this regard;

(iv) Reviewing the education curricula during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), employing the themes of quality and critical thinking, life skills, water use, hygiene and sanitation in the

curricula; such education is aimed at changing the mindset of children and youth all over the world;

(v) Capacity-building and training for teachers on sustainable development;

(vi) The creation of jobs for youth integrated into all levels of the water and sanitation sector;

(vii) Mentorship programmes should be designed to boost the capacity of youth organizations to better coordinate their projects and maximize the use of their funding; such programmes will demonstrate the commitment of Governments and donors to constructive support of grass-roots initiatives;

(b) The establishment of youth councils;

(c) Technical, financial and political support should be given to local children and youth-spearheaded projects based on children and youth's own priorities, recognizing that children and youth are full partners;

(d) The involvement of community groups and the local private sector;

(e) Acknowledgement of the human rights to adequate, affordable water, housing and sanitation.

Recommendation on the water theme

38. Water is a public good and not a commodity to be traded; the regulation, control and management must always remain within the public sector.

39. The United Nations and its agencies should monitor and regulate water processes to ensure that decisions, especially decisions on water privatization, are not prescribed by donors to recipient (poor) countries as a condition for giving assistance.

40. Creative community water partnerships and traditional community-specific water management systems should be studied and documented.

41. Such partnerships should be examined to determine how they could be enhanced, expanded and/or duplicated in other communities, thus ensuring that local knowledge and resources are utilized and acknowledged.

42. Enhancing the role of young women in decision-making processes should go beyond mere talk. It should be made mandatory for national, regional and international reports to specifically highlight the percentage of young women participants and their level of participation.

43. An international body should be created through which organizations, communities and local governments can monitor, evaluate and report their concerns about the activities of corporations and governments and translate lessons learned into policy.

Recommendations on the sanitation theme

44. The sanitation indicators and targets should be cited and reaffirmed.

45. Access to basic sanitation should become part of the poverty reduction strategy paper process at the World Bank.

46. National Governments should create an enabling environment guaranteeing the participation of children and youth in development and implementation of basic sanitation projects.

47. National Governments should support scaling up the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All campaign, especially since youth is willing to lead the campaign.

48. Region-based and cultural and gender-sensitive approaches to basic sanitation should be recognized, if they exist, and developed and implemented if not.

49. Basic sanitation services should be available in every school; basic sanitation is a precondition for education.

Recommendations on the human settlements theme

50. A gender-sensitive approach in the development and implementation of all policies, including housing policies should be used.

51. An integrated approach to the provision of water, electricity, sanitation, drainage, human health and solid waste management should be adopted.

52. Appropriate master plans for major towns should be implemented and monitored, where they exist, and new ones prepared and implemented where they are non-existent or out of date.

53. Rural economies should be improved through the development of cottage and agro-allied industries to create job opportunities for rural dwellers, thereby stemming the tide of rural to urban migration.

54. At least 75 per cent of rural communities should be provided with social amenities to stimulate and sustain self-reliant development and curb rural to urban migration.

55. Private sector and community participation in activities relating to urban renewal, housing and infrastructure should be encouraged.

56. National human settlements data banks should be established to provide baseline information that can be used to better plan for sustainable human settlements.

57. Low-income families should be ensured access to and ownership of land.

58. In addition, there is a need to upgrade squatter settlements through the provision of basic infrastructure and services. In this process, beneficiary communities must not play a passive role, rather they must act as initiators of development. This will reduce donor dependency syndrome.

III. Indigenous peoples

Four key points

59. Governments must recognize the interests in, and the rights over, water resources, including customary uses, traditionally held by indigenous peoples, and to that end they must endure that indigenous rights are enshrined in national legislation and policy.

60. Improved services for better water management means: improved water governance that ensures effective use of existing resources and the active participation of indigenous peoples and all stakeholders; a substantial increase in financing water infrastructure and targeted financing schemes; and mechanisms for empowerment and capacity-building.

61. The effective development and management of water resources and the efficient and equitable provision of water supply and sanitation services are essential for poverty reduction, ecosystem protection and sustainable growth.

62. Indigenous peoples and local communities must be active participants in the implementation of the targets set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Millennium Development Goals as well as in the implementation of integrated water resource management plans, the Integrated River Basin Management initiative and poverty reduction strategy papers.

Human right to water

63. Governments should acknowledge the basic human right to water, as affirmed by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the Economic and Social Council in November 2002. Recognition of this right in national policy-making and legislation is critical to bringing about a basic approach to poverty eradication.

64. The obligations of States with regard to the protection of human rights and the environment must also be followed by the World Trade Organization and in the General Agreement on Trade Services and other regional and bilateral trade agreements.

Integrated water resource management

65. By 2005, all countries should have integrated water resource management processes completed or near completion.

66. Governments must recognize that in many indigenous cultures women are often the caretakers and users of traditional water resource systems and that, therefore, the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in integrated water resource management planning, implementation and monitoring is required.

67. An ecological approach, incorporating principles of indigenous traditional ecological knowledge on water management, should be implemented.

68. Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge principles of the sacred nature of water should be integrated into water resource management strategies.

Human settlements

69. Issues with regard to human settlements, in both urban and rural areas, deserve equal attention.

70. Development of action plans on human settlements and implementation of integrated land use planning and integrated water resource management plans must be strengthened to provide security of tenure and legal protection of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples.

71. Legal protection for the rights of indigenous peoples in development processes, planning and implementation of accessible water, sanitation, labour and other infrastructure projects for human settlements are outstanding obstacles, which must be addressed.

72. Safeguards must be put in place to protect vulnerable and poor communities, in particular those whose well-being is closely linked to biodiversity and natural world integrity, that are affected by human settlements and involuntary resettlement.

Water and sanitation

73. Regional and global goals should be developed into realistic and measurable local and national targets for improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene services.

74. Strategies that explore alternatives to large-scale private sector systems and technologies by seeking innovations in formal or informal small-scale water system providers, intermediate technologies, indigenous knowledge and community-based approaches should be adopted.

75. Developing and developed countries with indigenous tribal populations must develop and strengthen clear policies, targets, financing mechanisms and institutional frameworks to improve sanitation services and to assure that indigenous communities have access to a safe and adequate water supply.

76. The public sector and local government must plan, implement, maintain and own water and sanitation services, ensuring that they are demand-responsive and people-oriented. Governments must commit to public sector delivery of water services.

77. In indigenous communities, mechanisms giving indigenous peoples the option to control and manage their own water and sanitation systems must be provided.

Governance

78. Developing countries need to take primary responsibility for establishing good water governance and water management plans and to ensure that water is integrated into national poverty reduction strategies.

79. Governments must enhance the participation and mutual partnership of indigenous peoples in all aspects of agricultural water use, including the development and management of water resources and water and sanitation services, and must recognize indigenous peoples' interests in water use, allocation and customary uses.

80. Governments, the private sector, donors, financial institutions, NGOs and intergovernmental organizations must implement policies that ensure that indigenous peoples have the right to free prior and informed consent and consultation by cultural appropriate means in all decision-making activities and all matters, including partnerships. In many indigenous communities, collective decision-making enhances self-development.

Financing and investments

81. Financial contributions need to be increased from all main sources, including national Governments, donors, multilateral financing institutions, commercial lenders, private investors, voluntary donations and other sources, and made available to reach countries most in need of water supply and sanitation.

82. National and international capital should be available at the local level, and to sub-sovereign and indigenous peoples, to provide financing for small-scale, technologically appropriate water infrastructure and sanitation services.

83. International and domestic systems of restoration, financing, investment and compensation should be established in partnership with indigenous peoples in order to restore the integrity of damaged watersheds and ecosystems.

Privatization and the commodification of water

84. Water and water services must be kept distinct from the negotiations of the General Agreement on Trade Services, the World Trade Organization, and other multilateral and regional trade agreements.

85. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and regional banks, such as the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, must stop the imposition of water privatization or "full cost recovery" as a condition for new loans and the renewal of loans to developing countries.

86. Indigenous interests and rights must be respected in international agreements on trade and investment.

Capacity-building

87. Capacity development, which is a main focus of water policies, needs to be amplified with more action and targets, with particular emphasis on building capacities in indigenous and local communities.

88. Capacity-building and appropriate technological transfer initiatives that recognize indigenous traditional practices of water management, which are dynamically regulated systems, must be implemented. Capacity-building includes developing educational programmes on indigenous traditional ecological knowledge of water systems.

89. The importance of cultural diversity of water issues should be a guiding principle in the development of educational and capacity-building initiatives, as well as in designing assessment and monitoring methods.

Government and corporate accountability

90. Political, technical and legal mechanisms should be developed at the national and international level so that States, the private sector and international financial institutions can be held accountable for any action (or inaction) that threatens the integrity of water systems.

Cross-cutting issues related to energy, climate change and mineral extraction

91. Governments, international financial institutions, bilateral donors and the private sector should cease promoting mega-projects without reference to international agreements and should always incorporate the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams into water and energy planning processes, including reparations.

92. It is imperative that States fulfil the mandates of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol since weather changes are causing droughts, forest fires, the flooding of land and coastal areas and small island States as well as the loss of snow cover, glaciers and ice conditions within the polar, arctic and mountain regions that comprise the biological integrity of the river systems, water basins and oceans.

93. Governments must call upon the World Bank Group to take the findings published in its Extractive Industries Review seriously and implement all the recommendations contained therein. Failure to implement those recommendations will be regarded as a failure of the World Bank to act in good faith with indigenous peoples, local communities, civil society, local authorities and all stakeholders, given that mining and mineral extractive activities consume vast amounts of water resources from aquifers, groundwater and surface water systems and affect human and ecological health via water contamination from such methods of extraction.

IV. Non-governmental organizations

94. Agendas and action programmes on water, sanitation and human settlements have been accepted in various international forums. In practice, however, NGOs have evidence that in many countries:

(a) Participation is widely accepted but not adequately implemented;

(b) Fragmentation of responsibilities for water and sanitation between government agencies is problematic;

(c) Community-based management is successful but not promoted;

(d) Prioritization for the poor rarely occurs;

(e) Impact on the environment is not considered — integrated water resource management plans are missing;

(f) There is insufficient consideration of cultural diversity and gender;

(g) Objectives don't link to local financing structures and capacities.

Recommendations of non-governmental organizations to achieve the goals set out at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

95. Governments should significantly increase their political and financial commitment to the water, sanitation and human settlements sectors, taking a poverty and rights-based approach with defined criteria for implementation.

96. Considering that access to sufficient water for basic human needs and housing are established human rights, they should be incorporated into national law, backed by specific measurable plans for implementation.

97. An integrated sector-wide approach should become the basis for coordination across government ministries, bringing together agencies responsible for water, sanitation, environment, health, agriculture and education, including the cross-cutting theme "Sustainable consumption and production" and involving all stakeholders.

98. Integrated water resource management should be used for management and planning, providing a model for the long-term environmental security of water resources and requiring a long-term political and technical push, which should be operationalized locally.

99. Many community groups and NGOs, valuable entities that are successfully managing local resources, and are willing and able to do more to support actions, communicate impacts, local demands and knowledge, require promotion by and support of Governments as well as access to information and decision-making. Stakeholder-led platforms that monitor and discuss policies on water, sanitation, hygiene promotion and habitat have proven successful in many different contexts.

100. Culturally and gender-sensitive approaches to sanitation must be developed, keeping in mind that lack of proper sanitation is a major cause of poverty through ill-health.

101. Unresolved transboundary and local conflicts over the quantity and quality of water can block access to water resources by people who need it to live. Responsibility for the resolution of such conflicts must be urgently addressed at all levels.

The goals of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development can only be delivered by governance structures that allow local communities to participate and provide a basis for the equitable allocation of water. Strategic frameworks and delivery plans should include the steps set out below.

102. The participation of local communities, farmers, business and NGOs in a multi-stakeholder framework must be ensured, whereby:

(a) All relevant actors are involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of projects/policies as equal partners from the outset;

(b) Different interests and responsibilities are acknowledged;

(c) Particular attention is paid to the involvement of community groups, women and children.

103. Institutional capacities must be strengthened, aimed at:

(a) Changing the institutional mindset;

(b) Optimizing the use of the knowledge of local communities and institutions;

(c) Setting up educational and social marketing campaigns on sanitation, hygiene and wise use of water.

104. Dialogues, networks and mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, aimed at sharing experiences, determining the lessons learned and translating them into policy, should be initiated.

105. Monitoring and reporting on progress, distinguishing between impacts according to different gender, ethnicity and cultures, must be carried out.

106. Infrastructure development is required, ensuring respect for the principles of environmental and social sustainability, including:

(a) Recognition and implementation of existing safeguard policies for large-scale infrastructure, such as the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams, as due diligence, by Governments and financiers;

(b) Use of full cost-benefit analysis to assess various options before implementation;

(c) Upscaling the use of "soft" engineering techniques for water resources management and work within natural systems.

107. Mobilizing resources for long-term investment in the water, sanitation and human settlements sectors requires action at all levels. Simultaneously, the needs and desires of local stakeholders must be heeded; they should not have to pay for services they cannot afford or do not need.

108. The Governments of developed countries need to reverse the declining levels of official development assistance (ODA) to the sectors, focusing on countries most in need. Multilateral and bilateral programmes on the same target group and/or region need to be coordinated.

109. Tariff structures for water use must be set up, although they must not prevent poor people's access to affordable services and should include methods for valuing their contributions "in-kind" towards operation and maintenance. Water and related services must never be traded as a commodity.

110. Private sector participation is not the solution to the financial gap and must never be imposed as a condition of grants or loans. Water is a public good, and regulation of and control over water must always remain within the public sector.

111. The collection of accurate data for consolidation into national budgeting and planning needs to be systematized, and used to prioritize the needs of the poorest.

112. Successful pilot cases where innovative mechanisms have been used to pay for ecosystems services should be studied and used as models.

113. Increasing access to sanitation and hygiene promotion is problematic, but there are many good examples to be adopted, including:

(a) City-wide sanitation strategies with solutions adapted to the entire population;

(b) Social marketing and educational programmes on hand-washing and hygiene;

(c) Scaling up the grass-roots-led total sanitation campaign begun in South Asia by the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All campaign;

(d) Technological choices that meet the needs and demands of the public, including decentralized systems, ecosanitation and dry toilets, as well as information to promote educated choice.

114. The reform of outdated laws, using a participatory process, is urgently needed, along with capacity-building and training for all actors in complying with and monitoring legislation, including:

(a) Legislation for integrated water resource management and water efficiency strategies that conserve watersheds and guarantee equitable sharing of water between users, underpinned by an effective environmental regulatory framework;

(b) Provision of land tenure for poor people in urban slums, in particular for improving the legal recognition of women's rights;

(c) Provision of legal frameworks for local municipalities and civil society groups to safeguard their rights, quality standards and affordability when third parties are involved in providing water or housing;

(d) Undertaking reforms to separate the powers of water service providers and water regulators, which should always remain under public control;

(e) Recognition of small-scale private sector water suppliers, within an environment where all service providers are regulated; and ensuring that new service providers will not be promoted without a properly established and funded regulatory framework;

(f) Regulation to prevent infill of water bodies from urban sprawl and depletion of the water table from mega-cities;

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to provide capacity-building and guidelines on urban management.

V. Local authorities

115. Water, sanitation and human settlements are focal areas of local government action. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Governments agreed to enhance the role and capacity of local authorities as well as stakeholders in implementing Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the Summit and in strengthening the continuing support for local Agenda 21 programmes and associated initiatives and partnerships. The policy recommendations adopted at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development should further support those commitments.

Challenges for local government

116. The challenges to local government in the water and sanitation sector include:

(a) Poor or non-existent local water governance;

(b) Lack of water and sanitation management tools;

(c) Poor access to financing for water and sanitation infrastructure and capacity-building;

(d) Poor understanding of the interlinkages of water and sanitation with gender issues, health, education, poverty and economy.

117. The challenges to local government in the human settlements sector include:

(a) Rapid urbanization as a result of rural to urban migration;

(b) Unplanned "informal" settlements;

(c) Poor planning regulation and building standards;

(d) Increasing homelessness and a decline in investment in social housing;

(e) Regulatory gaps in land reform, housing, planning and building policies.

118. The needs of local governments identified in the report of the chair of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development include:

(a) Further decentralization of services and the devolution of decision-making;

(b) Further involvement of local communities, especially women, in planning and policy-making;

(c) Capacity-building for local water governance to strengthen analysis and management of solutions;

(d) Understanding of partnerships as an effective implementation tool, although not as a substitute for government leadership and action;

(e) Further mobilization of local finance and other resources (technical, human, etc.).

Strategies and programmes

119. Local authorities submit the following recommendations on strategies and programmes:

(a) It is necessary to establish local to national links in order to ensure a coherent approach to national poverty reduction and sustainable development plans, which should better reflect local priorities, for example, through supporting local strategies and subnational processes;

(b) Strengthening of the local government level: capacity-building programmes for local decision makers and municipal staff are needed to support local strategic approaches, including through national local government associations and networks of municipalities.

Legal, regulatory and institutional policies: a framework for decentralization and subsidiarity

120. The following principles should be further supported by Member States:

"Decentralized governance for development is a key area of democratic governance which is crucial to attaining human development and the Millennium Development Goals" (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2004).

"Principles of 'good urban governance' are sustainability, subsidiarity, equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability, civic engagement and citizenship and security" (UN-Habitat).

121. Local authorities submit the following recommendations on legal, regulatory and institutional policies:

(a) Regulatory powers (ability to enforce local guidelines, policies, and create revenue through taxation and fees) and resources (finance, technical, management and governance capacity) should be decentralized;

(b) Local-level organizations should be involved in national planning strategies and reporting;

(c) Land reforms should be undertaken to provide secure tenure, especially for the poorest.

Financing: enhanced local autonomy

122. Improving access to financing for targeted service provision requires increased financial autonomy of subnational and local authorities. This is at the core of decentralization and subsidiarity. Financial autonomy can bring about both greater efficiency, by reflecting local priorities better, and accountability, through establishing closer relationships between service providers and recipients.

123. Fiscal decentralization should be a core component of poverty reduction programmes. To improve mechanisms for mobilizing local fiscal resources and local spending, local financial administrators must be trained in revenue generation and accountability. Such activities require additional resources from Governments and external donors.

124. Local authorities submit the following recommendations on financing:

(a) Tools and mechanisms (e.g., pooling of local governments regionally to access funds jointly) to increase financing of local infrastructure (water, sanitation and housing) should be developed;

(b) Local access to financing and local revenue creation (for example, the capacity to raise taxes and fees) should be made possible;

(c) With regard to sustainable consumption and production, national policies should be enacted and networks of municipalities encouraged to purchase goods and services (for example, transport, shelter, water and sanitation delivery) that meet sustainability criteria.

Capacity-building

125. Elected local government officials and municipal staff require capacity-building in a number of areas to enable sustainable local development. Support is needed through national local government associations, municipal networks and cooperation between cities, in addition to national and donor support.

126. Local authorities submit the following recommendations on capacity-building:

(a) Good local water governance, with human rights, sustainability and pro-poor orientation as the basis of any capacity-building, should be instituted;

(b) Local government decision-making and management skills, enabling local politicians and officials to be effective managers of water, sanitation and human settlements in the short to long term, should be introduced;

(c) Targeted capacity-building for key local practitioners, including planners, environmental health officers, sanitation and waste service providers and financial administrators, should be carried out;

(d) Skills for participatory approaches (civic dialogues, negotiation, conflict management and consensus building) to support active community involvement in local planning, decision-making and service delivery should be strengthened;

(e) Information for decision-making, strengthening local capacity for data collection and analysis to enhance monitoring, reporting and decision-making and providing better information to national Governments, should be made available.

Recommended actions

127. Local authorities submit the following recommended actions in the water and sanitation sector:

(a) The central importance of good local water governance must be recognized;

(b) Mechanisms should be developed to increase financing for local water and sanitation infrastructures, including a thorough assessment of the recommendations made in the report of the World Panel on Financing Water Infrastructure as soon as possible;

(c) Decentralization and local government engagement with other stakeholders has a direct impact on water governance, in which context issues of gender and other inequalities can be addressed, building on lessons learned from local Agenda 21 participatory processes;

(d) Capacity-building of local government leaders is crucial for a full understanding of the implications of various options for service delivery, including privatization and partnerships;

(e) Affordable service provision, for example housing programmes that help low-income households afford better provision of water and sanitation, are essential;

(f) Inhabitants of informal settlements must be provided with tenure, allowing utilities to extend provision for piped water and sewer connections.

128. In the human settlements sector, local authorities recommend:

(a) Service delivery to informal and illegal settlements requiring basic services should be a commitment by all stakeholders, including all levels of government;

(b) National housing standards should be re-examined with regard to sustainability: national support is required to ensure that housing standards are applied;

(c) Local involvement is needed in national, multilateral and bilateral schemes to make housing affordable for all.

129. Local authorities recommend the following general actions:

(a) National strategies need to foster dialogue and cooperation between urban and rural jurisdictions and encourage greater regional coherence;

(b) Governments and international agencies should: encourage networking, technical exchanges and study visits to support local learning and capacity-building for sustainable development; provide additional support to national, regional and international urban sustainability programmes; and promote more targeted information-sharing, enabling cities to learn from each other;

(c) Governments and international agencies should encourage local action.

VI. Workers and trade unions

130. The workers and trade unions major group asks delegates to ensure that the following recommendations are reflected in text negotiated at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development as they grow out of the outcomes contained in the final report of the twelfth session of the Commission (E/2004/29).

131. **Outcome No. 1: Collaborative initiatives to strengthen political will and coherency.** In approaches to sustainable development by engaging trade unions and other civil society groups to raise political consciousness and engagement, the Commission should give its support to the proposals contained in the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations (A/58/817).

132. The Chair of the twelfth session of the Commission noted a lack of political will and coherency at the national and international levels, and ministers agreed that more political commitment and strengthened governance are required at all levels to meet targets.

133. More information and engagement tools in civil society will provide political direction and support to politicians who support change, as well as an electorate more willing to make lifestyle changes and sacrifices.

134. **Outcome No. 2: Tools and strategies to support democratic and participatory governance and action**. The development of social indicators, country profiling and reporting within the framework of adopted country plans and strategies should be used as tools to support activities in this regard.

135. At its twelfth session, the Commission recognized that strong institutions and good governance, including the participation of civil society, are key to mobilizing investment, ensuring the proper use of scarce government resources and providing service delivery to the poor and cited a lack of complete, coherent information as a major obstacle to implementation of sustainable development initiatives.

136. At the thirteenth session of the Commission in 2005, trade unions will circulate the initial results of a collaborative effort with other groups to employ common indicators as the basis for country-by-country sustainable development profiles (see http://www.tuac.org/statemen/communiq/kit-Count-profile.pdf).

137. **Outcome No. 3: Access to water, sanitation and habitation as fundamental human rights.** At its twelfth session, the Commission noted the concerns expressed by major groups that water is a fundamental right, not an economic good, requiring significant financial and human resources, as well as regulatory frameworks and public sector provision. It noted a lack of leadership by Governments in the debate over privatization of water resource management and called for a clear distinction between water for basic human needs and water for economic uses as a basis for socially balanced pricing in national plans and implementation strategies.

138. **Outcome No. 4: Partnerships that support public ownership and regulation.** United Nations partnerships must abide by United Nations principles rather than posing as substitutes for vital human services. More research on public/private partnerships is needed.

139. At the twelfth session, major groups asked that all United Nations-approved partnerships contribute to sustainable development, particularly in the social dimension. The principles contained in General Assembly resolution 58/129 call for joint decision-making, information-sharing and implementation, implying worker participation in workplace partnerships. Concern was expressed that some public/private partnerships may be little more than substitutes for government ownership or the regulation of vital human services and requested that more research be done on the successes and failures of these experiments as compared to public sector models.

140. The role of corporations must be clearly distinguished from those of government, and concrete measures should be adopted to evaluate and report in company performance in areas of social and environmental responsibility.

141. **Outcome No. 5: Rights of workers and trade unions.** The rights of workers and trade unions are integral human rights. Member States should be encouraged to ratify and implement applicable International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions.

142. Trade unions allow workers to defend their interests and take part in action for sustainable development in the workplace and the community. Not only are good industrial relations recognized in the Political Declaration adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, all Member States are bound by the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998. Failure to address widespread denial of the rights of trade unions and workers indicates a disconnection between ministries that uphold the ILO principles and those that attend the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, as well as related incoherence in governance structures and policy implementation.

143. **Outcome No. 6: Decent employment.** Effective employment strategies should be encouraged as key to poverty, the provision of access and other problems encountered in the world today, providing leadership in the "jobs versus environment" debate.

144. At its twelfth session the Commission recognized the disproportionate effect that unsustainable patterns in water, sanitation and human settlement have on the poor, women and other vulnerable groups and confirmed that decent employment is a key to providing access and other poverty solutions in these areas. The Commission called for a clear alignment of national strategies to MDGs through policy and action plans linking employment and poverty alleviation, with attention to the role communities and major groups might play.

145. The negotiated text adopted at the thirteenth session of the Commission must also support "just transition" to protect the livelihood of workers in the course of change and win their support and that of their communities for sustainable development goals.

146. **Outcome No. 7: Workplace focus to change production and consumption patterns.** Trade unions and workers call for employer/trade union cooperation in

joint workplace assessment and action programmes as well as for supportive trade and investment frameworks.

147. At its twelfth session the Commission linked unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in water, sanitation and human settlement to such cross-cutting issues as poverty eradication. The thirteenth session must reinforce this focus and encourage countries to implement workplace strategies that promote worker and trade union participation (see outcome No. 5) for joint approaches to saving water, eliminating wastes and securing proper housing for communities. It should be standard practice that sourcing companies require suppliers and subcontractors in their supply chains to respect these standards.

148. **Outcome No. 8: Occupational and public health links.** The links between HIV/AIDS, economic opportunity and access to services in a strong public sector must be highlighted and support given to the observance of International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers on 28 April.

149. At its twelfth session, the Commission drew attention to the connections between HIV/AIDS, economic opportunity and access to services in communities, as well as the urgency of addressing such "tenure" issues as the inheritance rights of women.

150. To recognize the plight of over 2.2 million workers who die in the workplace every year and the 160 million more who suffer from work-related diseases, the text adopted at the thirteenth session should reinforce the link established at the World Summit on Sustainable Development between occupational health and safety and public health analyses and programmes that build on links between workplace, public health and the environment.

151. **Outcome No. 9: More inter-agency and intergovernmental cooperation.** Multilateral institutions and instruments that focus on the social dimension must be given a clear mandate. Efforts to redefine trade rules, investment frameworks and economic instruments to support sustainable development should be continued.

152. At its twelfth session the Commission reaffirmed the importance of inter-agency work, including the work of the international financial institutions, to achieve progress in water, sanitation and human settlements, under the coordination of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The text adopted at the thirteenth session must build on this by encouraging investment frameworks that support national action and public sector provision by such bodies as the European Union, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ILO, UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO).

VII. Business and industry

Introduction: action by business for water and sustainability

153. The business community shares the concern about the scale of the challenge of meeting the goals and targets for water, sanitation and human settlements agreed to in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Declaration.

154. The community recognizes, however, that to achieve the necessary rate of progress requires engagement of all sectors of society. Business can only operate effectively in a strong and stable legal, regulatory and economic context.

155. The present document identifies the following priorities for action, which will enable the business community to contribute more effectively:

(a) Responsibilities for action;

(b) Unlocking finance;

(c) Catchment management and planning;

(d) Infrastructure and technology;

(e) Effective partnership building.

Responsibilities for action

156. Global targets for water, sanitation and human settleme .s must be broken down into country targets so that national Governments and their partners can improve measurement, management and reporting of progress.

157. Governments and donor agencies should encourage an understanding of how water and sanitation contribute to economic development and improved health and education, with the aim of raising the profile of water and sanitation priorities in national poverty reduction strategy papers.

158. A focus on improving hygiene education and developing appropriate sanitation facilities should be encouraged, as these steps will bring significant health benefits on a local level.

159. Land tenure issues need to be tackled to enable the provision of improved water and sanitation services to those who most need it.

160. The devolution of responsibility for the provision of water to local authorities requires capacity-building focused on contract negotiation and sustainable economic management. Government agencies and regulators need better training to oversee operator performance, irrespective of whether the operator is public, private or from the informal sector.

161. Businesses providing water services should encourage effective economic, quality and environmental regulation and conform to its requirements.

162. Water users require capacity-building to engage in stakeholder consultations and to improve community water management. Particular emphasis should be given to the involvement on women, who are often responsible for domestic water management.

Unlocking financing

163. With the following enabling conditions in place, business recognizes the role of private sector financing alongside public sources of investment.

164. Governments and donor agencies should emphasize that access to financial resources goes hand in hand with good governance by creating environments favourable to private investment, reducing risk through combating corruption and providing credit support through grants, loans and/or guarantees.

165. Appropriate models for tariffs and taxes should be developed, including local community inputs regarding how they value the different options for water use. Civil society organizations should promote community engagement in this process.

All models should allow Governments to protect the public interest and ensure that investors and service providers are fairly compensated for the services they provide.

166. Governments and donor agencies should support innovative partnerships between local governments, the local and international private sector and local and international NGOs, permitting the use of ODA to initiate these shared risk models.

167. Donor agencies should streamline the process of releasing ODA marked for water and sanitation.

Catchment management and planning

168. States should implement integrated water resource management programmes and promote harmonized data capture and management systems. States may require capacity-building to manage the linkages between integrated water resource management legislation, planning, implementation and monitoring processes.

169. Businesses should contribute to integrated water resource management by taking a responsible approach to their impact on water throughout the life cycle of their products and processes. They should share their understanding of these impacts and how they can best be managed with local decision makers. Major water users should develop water management plans with the input of appropriate stakeholders.

170. The potential implications of climate change should be taken into account by Governments, business and civil society as they develop their action plans.

171. Governments, business and civil society should view water as a cyclical rather than a linear process, encouraging greater focus on the re-use of waste water.

172. Irrigation practices that use water inefficiently may need to be changed to allow other uses for the water, such as for municipal supplies or to protect ecosystems.

173. The further development of full cost accounting should be encouraged to promote understanding of the economic benefits derived from ecosystem services and to ensure that the environmental costs and benefits of different water uses are fully accounted for.

174. Water treatment and sanitation facilities require significant energy inputs and should be planned in the context of utilizing or developing appropriate local energy sources, including the renewable electricity generation potential of the facilities themselves.

175. Water resources development and management should be planned for a hydrological unit, such as a drainage basin as a whole or a sub-basin. Transboundary cooperation should be actively encouraged.

176. States should ensure that catchment management plans prevent ecosystems being exploited beyond their natural capacity to recover.

177. Catchment management plans should consider the needs of all stakeholders (domestic, agricultural, industrial, urban and rural) and involve them in planning and decision-making processes. Education and awareness-raising should be encouraged to enable the effective participation of stakeholders.

178. In both the developed and developing world, Governments, business and civil society should work together to develop and implement educational programmes to

bring about a shift to more efficient water use in the domestic, agricultural and industrial sectors.

Infrastructure and technology

179. Governments, business and civil society should work in partnership to lever business resources to transfer knowledge and skills and to share technologies and cooperate to accelerate their dissemination. Partners should assist business in building local capacity to improve community water and sanitation facilities. Business should create adaptable, affordable and effective solutions, such as desalination and rainwater harvesting.

180. Wherever safe piped water supplies are unavailable, point-of-use water treatment and safe storage should be implemented immediately. Such solutions should not be seen as a substitute for appropriate infrastructure that can provide substantial economic benefits and reliability of supply.

181. Multinational businesses should help build the capacity of local industry, including small water service providers, so that they can undertake operational, maintenance and renewal works, improving sustainable economic management through avoiding dependence on imported skills.

Effective partnership building

182. Public versus private delivery of services is not the issue. The provision of water and sanitation services is generally recognized as a public service, whether operated by the public or private sectors. Governments, donors and civil society should ensure that they support solutions that are both efficient and acceptable to the local community.

183. New management models based on clearly defined partnerships should be encouraged. These may include different combinations of local and international NGOs, businesses, public sector operators, local water sellers and fountain or well operators.

184. Much of the success of a partnership lies in a common commitment to understanding the challenge faced, building trust and solving problems together. Training on how to ensure successful partnerships should be encouraged for all participants.

Conclusion

185. It is vital that Governments and all major groups recognize the enormous and very diverse contribution that business will make to the development of new and sustainable models for meeting the world's needs for water, sanitation and human settlement. They should actively seek the widest possible engagement from the business sector. The business sector is committed to positive engagement with all stakeholders to meet the MDGs.

VIII. Scientific and technological community

Need for better harnessing of science and technology

186. At its twelfth session, the Commission concluded that improved harnessing of science and technology would be an indispensable condition for meeting the MDGs and implementing the recommendations in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation related to water, sanitation and human settlements.

187. Investments in science and technology continue to be inadequate, especially in developing countries where funding for research and development is often less than 0.5 per cent of annual gross domestic product (GDP). Investments in the natural, social, engineering and health science fields geared towards sustainable development are among the highest yielding investments that a nation can make.

188. The scientific and technological community is committed to implementing necessary changes in the conduct of its work and to developing strong partnerships with other stakeholders in sustainable development. These changes include: making scientific research more policy relevant; integrating the environmental, social and economic pillars; following broad-based participatory approaches in defining a research agenda; and addressing a variety of geographic scales from local to global.

189. Based on the results of the twelfth session, the scientific and technological community submits the following recommendations to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Strengthening capacity to monitor freshwater and to develop integrated indicator sets

190. Given the widespread lack of reliable and easily accessible data on water resources, all countries should review and in most cases strengthen water-related national data-collection/long-term monitoring networks, including data on water quality, needs, demands and supplies and real-time data for flood and drought forecasting.

191. Freshwater-related components of existing global environmental observing systems should be strengthened and made fully operational, including through enhanced support to the Integrated Global Observing Strategy and the new Global Earth Observation System launched by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States of America.

192. National and regional assessments on water, sanitation and human settlements issues should be carried out in a participatory and integrated manner; particularly vulnerable regions should be identified.

193. Integrated indicator sets for measuring trends of key indicators and progress on goals and targets should be reviewed, developed and put into application.

Building enhanced national and regional scientific and technological capacity, with particular attention to developing countries

194. All countries to review and, in most cases, to significantly increase their investment in research and development, including human and institutional scientific and technological capacity-building in the natural, social, engineering and

health science domains, geared towards solving water, sanitation and human settlements problems.

195. There is a major need to bridge the North-South gap in scientific and technological capacity; developed countries and international organizations should support measures in those developing countries that are lacking in such capacity.

196. Existing specialized training and retraining curricula should be reoriented to ensure the education of a body of skilled professionals, highly knowledgeable on how to advance towards sustainable development goals in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Enhanced support to such improved training facilities should be provided worldwide, in particular in developing countries.

197. Water, sanitation and human settlements should be given high-priority in formal and informal education at all levels, including within the framework of the activities of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

198. Particular attention must be given to providing education and training for women.

199. More appropriate technologies (see E/CN.17/2004/10/Add.3, paras. 24-40), with particular attention to developing countries and low-cost technologies, should be reviewed, developed and put into application. Enhanced North-South and South-South transfer of technologies should be supported.

Improving scientific knowledge and knowledge sharing

200. All countries should increase their support for interdisciplinary, policy-relevant research involving the natural, social, engineering and health science domains, focused on sustainability issues related to water, sanitation and human settlements, with particular attention to research addressing the local context and the interlinked socio-economic and biophysical systems.

201. International scientific cooperation activities, including support for established interdisciplinary programmes in this field, for example through the newly launched Global Water System Project, should be enhanced.

202. Improved adaptive management strategies and water governance regimes to reduce the vulnerability and increase the adaptive capacity of water systems at different scales should be developed.

203. Activities aimed at improved knowledge sharing, for example, through expanded networking and the strengthening of scientific and technological clearing house functions should be supported, with particular attention given to the needs of developing countries.

204. Efforts by the engineering community to enhance knowledge and local adaptation of clean and, whenever appropriate, traditional technologies should be encouraged since, in many instances, traditional, culturally adapted, low-cost technologies offer viable solutions.

205. A strong and sound scientific and technological base for a 10-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production should be developed, as called for in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, including due attention to the water, sanitation and human settlements sectors.

Making scientists, engineers, educators and decision makers better partners in addressing sustainable development issues related to water, sanitation and human settlements

206. The scientific and technological community is committed to developing strong partnerships with other stakeholders concerned. Partnerships are required at local, national, regional and global levels with Governments, the private sector and all other major groups of civil society. Governments should support such partnerships and encourage improved interaction between scientists, engineers and educators and decision makers and civil society groups.

207. Innovative scientific and technological advisory instruments and processes at local, national, regional and global levels should be expanded and strengthened, including the screening of the scientific validity and robustness of different policy options.

208. Linkages between scientists, engineers and farmers on efforts to improve water management in agriculture should be enhanced, in particular by using an ecosystems approach.

209. Entities in the private sector should be encouraged to contribute to integrated water resource management by analysing how their activities impact on water throughout the life cycle of their products and processes and to share their knowledge widely in the scientific and technological community, as well as with decision makers at all levels.

210. Partnerships that blend traditional and scientific knowledge related to water, sanitation and human settlements, in collaboration with the indigenous peoples, farmers and business and industry major groups should be supported.

211. Activities aimed at improved scientific education and communications for sustainable development and at accelerating the process of moving from the generation of knowledge and technology to their practical application should be supported.

212. All of the above issues have also been extensively addressed in the dialogue paper presented at the twelfth session of the Commission by the scientific and technological community (E/CN.17/2004/10/Add.3), which is available on the Commission's web site as well as on the United Nations Official Document System in the six official United Nations languages.

IX. Farmers

Access to and management of freshwater resources in agriculture

An alarming situation

213. The agricultural sector is being called upon to double its production capacity over the next 25 years, using essentially the same resource base, in order to feed an additional 1.5 billion people by 2025.

214. At the present time, agriculture already uses 70 per cent of freshwater resources. In order to conserve water usage, farmers will have to use the best practices available to produce "more crop per drop".

215. Appropriate water and food strategies must be country, regional and local specific, but more particularly, they must take into account the specific needs of the different user communities and find appropriate means to balance them, without putting any of them on the fringe of decision-making processes.

Main causes of water shortages

216. Inefficient use of the water resource is often a consequence of:

(a) Weak infrastructure;

(b) Lack of a good functioning water authority with the right competencies;

(c) Poor maintenance of irrigation systems;

(d) Lack of incentives for efficient use of fresh water;

(e) Lacking drainage infrastructure or poor maintained drainage systems;

(f) Unsuitable crops which cause inefficiencies;

(g) National and international water management schemes are often lacking;

(h) Countries are often not willing to reach agreement on cross-border rivers and aquifers.

217. Farmers and their organizations often lack access to decision-making pertaining to water issues, either because they are not trusted enough or because they do not have the capacity to get involved actively.

Water for agriculture as a priority on national and global agendas

218. Water is necessary for food production, health and the livelihoods of millions of farm families. It is a public concern. Water is not a tradeable good. Increased priority is needed for water for agriculture both at the national, regional and international levels.

219. Water security should be recognized as a key to poverty alleviation. Particular attention should be given to farmers and the rural population because they are the first victims of water problems.

220. The International Federation of Agricultural Producers calls on national Governments to give priority to investment in water for agriculture and rural development as well as for the protection of the water resources in their national budgets and asks them to set clear priorities concerning water use.

221. While the quality of water is a prerequisite for sustainable development, its protection must be the shared responsibility of all stakeholders. Establishing voluntary agreements between local and regional authorities and between water stations and farmers are important in this regard.

222. The Fede.ation also calls for appropriate mechanisms for technology transfer and locally friendly, low-cost technology, and asks that they be made available to farmers. National and international political commitment is essential to translate this into action and to ensure sustainability and equity in the distribution of water resources.

223. The Federation urges relevant international organizations to include in their work programmes not only the questions of gender balance and indigenous peoples' rights, but also a requirement that they engage with local farmers' organizations as partners in all stages of development projects.

224. The Federation favours water management strategies that put emphasis on stewardship programmes for farmers who adapt their water management practices to meet environmental requirements.

225. The Federation urges the creation of a United Nations convention on water and poverty, including funding mechanisms.

226. The Federation recognizes the need to create an international mechanism to discuss, regulate and arbitrate over the usage and abstraction of water, especially in regionally shared basins.

227. The Federation calls for an integrated approach to water issues. National and regional water resources policies should be linked with other international agreements and processes related to environment, development, finance and trade.

Governance and regulation

228. National Governments are the guardians of the water resources. The principles of conservation, management and the use of water must be regulated by law, including guaranteeing access to water for everyone.

229. Farmers, including women farmers, need secure water supply rights and transparent legal frameworks, taking into account local socio-economic, cultural and hydrological contexts.

230. National governments are responsible for:

(a) Setting up a general framework with clear water policies and schemes through the establishment of a water code and national water institutions;

(b) Taking stock of the actual availability and use of water resources and identifying best water use practices;

(c) Developing risk management tools for farmers;

(d) Setting up clear priorities for the different uses of water resources.

231. While the private sector has a role in water delivery, its methods will not be cost-effective in remote rural areas, where the provision of water should remain a government responsibility.

Towards an integrated water management approach

232. nternational basins cover 45 per cent of the land surface of the Earth, touching the lives of 40 per cent of the world's population and connected to 80 per cent of the global river flow. The promotion of international river basin cooperation through decentralized targeted action for each river basin, with the full recognition of all uses and users and in consultation with all stakeholders, is needed. Such an appro ch would avoid tensions between competing users and help increase efficiency in water usage.

233. The management of water should go beyond technical and economic aspects by including social aspects. Education and awareness-raising help change basic attitudes to water.

234. Women farmers and young farmers need to be involved at all levels of decision-making because they are responsible for the major part of food production in many developing countries.

235. Farmers' organizations need support, in particular public support, to build their capacities and gain skills so that they are able to play their full role in water management and prioritization through user groups or other consultative frameworks. Farmers should be members of water associations.

236. Linking water management policies with agricultural policies is essential. The creation of special national budget lines for the participation of farmers' organizations is needed.

Developing partnerships as a follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals

237. Developing public/private partnerships for water access does not mean the total privatization of water resources. The working and maintenance of water distribution networks should be financed through such partnerships rather than at public expense.

238. Partnerships between researchers and farmers, using appropriate technologies, strengthen water research and extension services. Scientists must benefit from the traditional and indigenous knowledge of farmers by involving them in the formulation of research projects to meet their real needs.

239. There is a need for cooperation between donor agencies and industry for the transfer and adaptation of best technologies in this field.

Using all sources of funding

240. The International Federation of Agricultural Producers calls for:

(a) The mobilization of all sources of funding and an increase in development assistance as a complement to domestic sources of funding;

(b) The achievement of the 0.7 per cent target of GDP for ODA;

(c) Increased coordination of donors and international financial institutions to avoid resource duplication.

241. The Federation favours the creation of national and international solidarity funds to support sustainable water management initiatives with the provision that farmers' organizations are systematically included in such activities.